

Minutes

Michigan Freedom Trail Commission

11:00 AM – Friday May 25, 2018

Board Room, 5th Floor, Michigan History Center

702 W. Kalamazoo Street, Lansing, MI

Commissioners present: Roy Finkenbine, Rochelle Danquah, Michael Nassaney, Kevin Turman

Commissioners on conference call: Amanda Campbell, Robin Peebles

Excused: Kerry Brown, Juanita Moore, Edwina Murphy, David Teeter

Staff: Sandra Clark, Tobi Voigt

1. **Call to Order:** Finkenbine called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m.
2. **Approval of the agenda:** Campbell moved to accept, Turman seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
3. **Introductions:** The commissioners and staff introduced themselves.
4. **Public Comments:** No public comments
5. **Approval of minutes:** Danquah corrected a mistake on item 7c. She is working with Jamon Jordan on his application to the Network for Freedom, not on his program. Nassaney moved to approve the March 16, 2018 meeting minutes as amended; Danquah seconded the motion, and the minutes, as amended, were approved unanimously.
6. **Action items:**
 1. **Regional collaboration:**
 1. Event is October 27 from 9am - 3pm.
 2. Outcomes for the event: identify goals for regional collaboration, get commitments for collaboration leadership, identify IT volunteers to develop web presence for collaboration, next steps for the collaboration.
 3. The commission will develop its own mailing list, as well as work with the Historical Society of Michigan and Michigan Museums Association to spread the word about the event. Finkenbine will contact David Goldstein and Anise Hayes about their mailing list from the convening in Detroit in March 2017. Save the Date needs to go out by June 15.
 4. Voigt will develop a web page on the current History Center/Freedom Trail Commission website for information on the convening. Site needs to include a statement about what the convening is, the draft program for the event, and information on when registration will open.
 5. The commission discussed the morning presentation program, scheduled for 9am - 11am. Finkenbine noted that Deanda Johnson from the NPS Network to Freedom will attend and speak. Finkenbine invited Greg Roberts, director of the Ohio River National Freedom Corridor, to attend an talk about their work. Finkenbine is willing to speak from on behalf of the Commission. Clark will provide a brief welcome to the Michigan History Center.

6. Poster sessions in the rotunda, 11am - 12:30pm. Participants will be invited to bring information on their related work/projects. This will be communicated in the Save the Date. Voigt will facilitate the process for registering for tables. Voigt suggested that we also have a reserved literature table for individuals/groups that want to bring handouts, flyers. The commission needs to have a table to help answer questions on verifying historic sites, applying for Network to Freedom status, etc.
7. Lunch, 11am - 12:30pm. \$10 registration fee will be used to subsidize lunch costs. Lunch will be boxed and eating areas in will be available in the rotunda (tables/hi-tops), lunch room, Lake Superior room and, if weather is nice, courtyard. The group discussed using table topics to get people casually talking at lunch. Campbell will send some prompts.
8. Afternoon breakout groups, 12:30pm - 3pm. There will be 10 breakout group spaces. Clark and/or Nassaney will reach out to John Beck to help set questions for small group work, train facilitators, facilitate discussion by the whole to determine next steps. Training could be at the September 7 meeting.
9. Evaluation of the event: needs to be built into the program to help inform the commission on future steps. Voigt and Clark can work on creative evaluation strategies.
10. Event marketing:
 1. Web page on MHC website
 2. Save the Date to commission mailing list in June, additional emails in late-summer, fall when registration opens.
 3. Inclusion on eBlasts and other correspondence from commissioner institutions (as appropriate), MHC publications, and MMA and HSM.
 4. Small flyers or business cards for commissioners to pass out at events.
 5. Seek to advertise gathering on NPS Network to Freedom site

2. Network to Freedom nominations:

1. Second Baptist church in Detroit was accepted into the National Network to Freedom in March 2018.
2. Network to Freedom contacted Finkenbine about updating our information with them. Finkenbine provided his and Voigt's contact information.
3. Danquah contacted Carolyn Carter with WCCCD regarding her nomination, and Carter declined assistance with their nomination.

7. Reports:

1. Staff:

1. The Michigan Historical Commission recently received an application for a Historical Marker for a cemetery in Jackson related to the underground railroad. Details forthcoming.
2. The Michigan History Center is moving forward with the redevelopment of the permanent exhibition on Michigan between 1815-1865 to tell more diverse stories, including the underground railroad.

2. Chairperson: Written report attached.

3. Vice Chairpersons: No reports

4. Commissioner Reports: No reports.

8. Standing Committee Updates:

1. **Site Identification, Facilities & Programs:** Clark asked if there is interest in reviving a plan to mark the Michigan sites that are on Michigan's Freedom Trail and the Network to Freedom. It is less than two dozen sites. Campbell will review materials with Voigt and Clark.
2. **Cultural & Heritage Tourism:** No report
3. **Preservation & Support:** No report
4. **Education:** No report

9. New Business: None

10. News and Announcements:

1. Finkenbine is finishing an article for Michigan Quarterly Review on early underground railroad in Monroe in 1822.

11. Adjourn meeting: Danquah moved to adjourn, Turman second. The meeting adjourned at 12:48pm.

Remaining 2018 Meetings: September 7, November 16

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